

and awkward, but this is not the case. On all occasions the tail is carried with ease and grace. It is remarkable, too, that during a whole year spent actively in dense undergrowth, the bird seldom is found to have damaged the tail. He is, in fact, most careful of it and, when passing through a small space, proceeds with the same caution as the wearer of a new suit displays in negotiating a barbed-wire fence. One of the pictures reproduced, taken after the tail had been worn for a year, shows almost every dainty barb of the filmy plumes still complete.

In late August or early in September, usually, the whole tail is moulted, the large feathers being lost first. With but a triangular stump remaining, the bird presents a ludicrous appearance, a fact of which he appears to be conscious. Until the tail grows completely, in about ten weeks' time, he is definitely more retiring and elusive than at other times. The new tail begins to appear about three weeks after the loss of the old one, and the new outer feathers, in their progress towards maturity, are strongly suggestive of the growing fronds of a tree-fern.

During the present (1937) season the first male bird to moult in the Sherbrooke Forest area was seen to have lost the two large feathers on August 29, but still was wearing the filmy plumes. On September 5 he had lost the whole of the tail. One bird still carried the complete tail on September 19, but his sullen attitude and his silence throughout the day left the impression that the moulting period was at hand.

EXCURSION TO FRANKSTON

As a visit to Frankston during the week had shown that the season was not far advanced, on August 28 we took a route over the sunny hill-slopes to the south-east of the town. Flowers were abundant, but not a large number of species as yet. One of the Bush-peas was afterwards determined as *Pultenaea Readeriana*, named after a well-known botanist. This species was described comparatively recently (1922), and its range is not yet fully known. At two places we observed leaves of the Fringed Hare Orchid (*Leptoceras fimbriatum*). This flowers in late autumn or early winter, but the leaves, with conspicuous red lines, may be found till about October. At the farthest point reached, a shallow depression of different aspect suggested that some other species of plants might occur, and search was rewarded with the little Club Moss, *Phylloglossum*.

Other plants in flower included the Eyebright (*Euphrasia collina*), and a clear yellow form of the Showy Bossca (*Bossiaa tenera*). Owing to Mr. Audas' illness, I was asked to act as leader. There were about a dozen present.

T. S. HART,

Mr. J. H. Willis has been transferred from the Forests Commission, Daylesford, to the National Herbarium, where his services will be on loan pending the retirement of Mr. P. R. H. St. John. It is anticipated that Mr. Willis will accept appointment as a botanist on the Herbarium staff early next year.